

"THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—CHRIST.

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SOMETHING.

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FROM THE "SAND HILLS OF JUTLAND."

"I WILL be something," said the oldest of five brothers—"I will be of use in the world, let the position be ever so insignificant which I may fill. If it be only respectable, it will be something. I will make bricks—people can't do without these—and then I shall have done something."

"But something too trifling," said the second brother. "What you propose to do is much the same as doing nothing; it is no better than a hodman's work, and can be done by machinery. You had much better become a mason. *That* is something, and that is what I will be. Yes, that is a good trade. A mason can get into a trade's corporation, become a burgher, have his own colours and his own club. Indeed, if I prosper, I may have workmen under me, and be called 'Master,' and my wife 'Mistress;' and that would be something."

"That is next to nothing," said the third. "There are many classes in a town, and that is about the lowest. It is nothing to be called 'Master.' You might be very superior yourself, but, as a master-mason, you would be only what is called a 'common man.' I know of something better. I will be an architect—enter upon the confines of science, work myself up to a high place in the kingdom of mind. I know I must begin at the foot of the ladder. I can hardly bear to say it—I must begin as a carpenter's apprentice, and wear a cap, though I have been accustomed to go about in a silk hat. I must run to fetch beer and spirits for the common workmen, and let them be 'hail fellow well met'

with me. This will be disagreeable, but I will fancy that it is all a masquerade, and the freedom of maskers. To-morrow—that is to say, when I am a journeyman—I will go my own way. The others will not join me. I shall go to the academy, and learn to draw and design; then I shall be called an architect. That is something! That is much! I may become 'honourable,' or even 'noble'—perhaps both. I shall build and build, as others have done before me. *There* is something to look forward to—something worth being!"

"But that something I should not care about," said the fourth. "I will not march in the wake of anybody. I will not be a copyist; I will be a genius—will be cleverer than you all put together. I shall create a new style, furnish ideas for a building adapted to the climate and materials of the country—something which shall be a nationality—a development of the resources of our age—and, at the same time, an exhibition of my own genius."

"But if by chance the climate and the materials did not suit each other," said the fifth, "that would be unfortunate for the result. Nationalities may be so amplified as to become affectation. The discoveries of the age, like youth, may leave you far behind. I perceive right well that none of you will, in reality, become anything, whatever may be your expectations. But do all of you what you please; I shall not follow your examples. I shall keep myself disengaged, and shall reason upon what you perform. There is something wrong in every thing. I will pick that out, and reason upon it. That will be something."

And so he did; and people said of the fifth, "He has not settled to anything. He has a good head, but he does nothing."

Even this, however, made him something.

This is but a short history; yet it is one which will not end as long as the world stands.

But is there nothing more about the five brothers? What has been told is absolutely nothing. Hear further; it is quite a romance.

The eldest brother, who made bricks, perceived that from every stone, when it was finished, rolled a small coin; and though these little coins were but of copper, many of them heaped together became a silver dollar; and when one knocks with such at the baker's, the butcher's, and other shops, the doors fly open, and one gets what one wants. The bricks produced all this. The damaged and broken bricks were also made good use of.

Yonder, above the embankment, Mother Margrethe, a poor old woman, wanted to build a small house for herself. She got all the broken bricks, and some whole ones to boot; for the eldest brother had a good heart. The poor woman built her house herself. It was very small; the only window was put in awry; the door was very low, and the thatched roof might have been laid better; but it was, at least, a shelter and a cover for her. There was a fine view from it of the sea, which broke in its might against the embankment. The salt spray often dashed over the whole tiny house, which still stood there when he was dead and gone who had given the bricks.

The second brother could build in another way. He was also clever in his business. When his apprenticeship was over, he strapped on his knapsack, and sang the mechanic's song:

"While young, far-distant lands I'll tread,
Away from home to build.
My handiwork shall win my bread—
My heart with hope be filled.
And when my fatherland I see,
And meet my bride—hurrah!
An active workman I shall be;
Then who so happy and gay?"

And he *was* that. When he returned to his native town, and became a master, he built house after house—a whole street. It was a very handsome one, and a great ornament to the town. These houses built for him a small house which was to be his own. But how could the

houses build? Aye, ask them that, and they will not answer you; but people will answer for them, and tell you, "It certainly was that street that built him a house." It was only a small one, to be sure, and with a clay floor; but when he and his bride danced on it, the floor became polished and bright, and from every stone in the wall sprang a flower, which was quite as good as any costly tapestry. It was a pleasant house, and they were a happy couple. The colours of the mason's company floated outside, and the journeyman and apprentices shouted "hurrah!" Yes, that was something; and so he died—and that was also something.

Then came the architect, the third brother, who had been first a carpenter's apprentice, wearing a cap and going errands, but on leaving the academy, rose to be an architect, and he became a man of consequence. Yes, if the houses in the street built by his brother, the master mason, had provided him with a house, a street was called after the architect, and the handsomest house in it was his own. That was something; and he was somebody, with a long, high-sounding title besides. His children were called people of quality; and when he died, his widow was a widow of rank—that was something. And his name stood a fixture at the corner of the street, and was often in folks' mouths, being the name of a street—and that was certainly something.

Next came the genius—the fourth brother—who was to devote himself to new inventions. In one of his ambitious attempts, he fell, and broke his neck; but he had a splendid funeral, with a procession, and flags, and music. He was noticed in the newspapers, and three funeral orations were pronounced over him, the one longer than the others; and much delighted he would have been with them if he had heard them, for he was fond of being talked about. A monument was erected over his grave. It was not very grand, but a monument is always something.

He now was dead, as well as the three other brothers; but the fifth—he who was fond of reasoning or arguing—outlived them all; and that was quite right, for he had thus the last word. It was he who, folks said, "had a good head."

At length, his last hour also struck. He died, and he arrived at the gate of the kingdom of heaven. Spirits always come there two and two; and along with him stood there another soul, which wanted also to get in, and this was no other than the old Mother Margrethe, from the house on the embankment.

"It must surely be for the sake of contrast that I and yon paltry soul should come here at the same moment," said the reasoner. "Why, who are you, old one? Do you also expect to enter here?" he asked.

And the old woman courtesied as well as she could. She thought it was St. Peter himself who spoke.

"I am a miserable old creature without any family. My name is Margrethe."

"Well, now, what have you done and effected down yonder?"

"I have effected scarcely anything in yonder world—nothing that can tell in my favour here. It will be a pure act of mercy if I am permitted to enter this gate."

"How did you leave yon world?" he asked, merely for something to say. He was tired of standing waiting there.

"Oh! how I left it I really do not know. I had been very poorly, often quite ill, for some years past, and I was not able latterly to leave my bed, and go out into the cold and frost. It was a very severe winter, but I was getting through it. For a couple of days there was a dead calm, but it was bitterly cold, as your honor may remember. The ice had remained so long on the ground, that the sea was frozen over as far as the eye could reach. The towns-people flocked in crowds to the ice. I could hear it all as I lay in my poor room. The same scene continued till late in the evening—till the moon rose. From my bed I could see through the window far out beyond the seashore; and there lay on the horizon, just where the sea and sky seemed to meet, a singular-looking white cloud. I lay and looked at it—looked at the black spot in the middle of it, which became larger and larger; and I knew what that betokened, for I was old and experienced, though I had not often seen that sign. I saw it and shuddered. Twice before in my life had I seen that strange appearance in the sky, and I

knew that there would be a terrible storm at the spring-tide, which would burst over the poor people out upon the ice, who were now drinking and rushing about, and amusing themselves. Young and old—the whole town, in fact—were assembled yonder. Who was to warn them of coming danger, if none of them observed or knew what I now perceived? I became so alarmed, so anxious, that I got out of bed and crawled to the window. I was incapable of going further; but I put up the window, and on looking out, I could see the people skating and sliding, and running on the ice. I could see the gay flags, and could hear the boys shouting hurrah, and the girls and the young men singing in chorus. All was jollity and merriment there. But higher and higher arose the white cloud with the black spot in it. I cried out as loud as I could, but nobody heard me. I was too far away from them. The wind would soon break loose, the ice give way, and all upon it sink, without any chance of rescue. Hear me they could not, and for me to go to them was impossible. Was there nothing that I could do to bring them back to land? Then our Lord inspired me with the idea of setting fire to my bed; it would be better that my house were to be burned down, than that the many should meet with such a miserable death. Then I kindled the fire. I saw the red flames, and I gained the outside of the house; but I remained lying there. I could do no more, for my strength was exhausted. The blaze pursued me; it burst from the window, and out upon the roof. The crowds on the ice perceived it, and they came running as fast as they could to help me, a poor old wretch, who, they thought, would be burned in my bed. It was not one or two only who came—they all came. I heard them coming; but I also heard, all at once, the shrill whistle, the loud roar of the wind. I heard it thunder like the report of a cannon. The spring-tide lifted the ice, and suddenly it broke asunder; but the crowd had reached the embankment, where the sparks were flying over me. I had been the means of saving them all; but I was not able to survive the cold and fright, and so I have come up here to the gate of the kingdom of heaven; but I am told it is

locked against such poor creatures as I. And now I have no longer a home down yonder, on the embankment, though that does not insure me any admittance here."

At that moment the gate of heaven was opened, and an angel took the old woman in. She dropped a straw; it was one of the pieces of straw which had stuffed the bed to which she had set fire to save the lives of many, and it had turned to pure gold, but gold that was flexible, and turned itself into pretty shapes.

"See! the poor old woman brought this," said the angel. "What doth thou bring? Ah! I know well; thou hast done nothing—not even so much as making a brick. If thou could'st go back again, and bring only so much as that, if done with good intentions, it would be something; as thou wouldst do it, however, it would be of no avail. But thou canst not go back, and I can do nothing for thee."

Then the poor soul, the old woman from the house on the embankment, begged for him.

"His brother kindly gave me all the stones with which I built my humble dwelling. They were a great gift to a poor creature like me. May not all these stones and fragments be permitted to value as one brick for him? It was a deed of mercy. He is now in want, and this is mercy's home."

"Thy brother, whom thou didst think the most inferior to thyself—him whose honest business thou didst despise—shares with thee his heavenly portion. Thou shalt not be ordered away. Thou shalt have leave to remain outside here to think over and to repent thy life down yonder; but within this gate thou shalt not enter, until in good works thou hast performed *something*."

"I could have expressed that sentence better," thought the conceited logician; but he did not say this aloud, and that was surely already—SOMETHING.

THE PLANET VENUS.

"STAR of descending night! fair is thy light in the west! thou that liftest thy unshorn head from thy cloud: thy steps are stately on thy hill. What

dost thou behold in the plain? The stormy winds are laid. The murmur of the torrent comes from afar. Roaring waves climb the distant rock. The flies of evening are on their feeble wings: the hum of their course is on the field. What dost thou behold, fair light? But thou dost smile and depart. The waves come with joy around thee: they bathe thy lovely hair. Farewell thou silent beam!" Thus did Ossian address that beautiful planet which, ever and anon, adorns the western sky. Its name is derived from the goddess of beauty; but in ancient times it had other designations. The Egyptian names of the planets, with the exception of one or two, have not been transmitted to us. In the Sanscrit it is designated as a male planet, and it is called *Sukra*, i.e. the brilliant. The Greeks called it Phosphorus, on account of its brilliant light; and the Latins, Lucifer, when it rose before the sun, and Hesperus or Vesper when it followed him. And the morning and evening star were considered distinct, till Pythagoras showed that they were one and the same planet.

There are but three of the heavenly bodies whose light causes objects to project shadows, namely, the sun, moon, and Venus. With regard to the sun and moon, this is obvious to all; but with respect to Venus, it is not so apparent; and Sir John F. W. Herschel says, "The shadow must be thrown upon a white ground. An open window in a whitewashed room is the best exposure. In this situation I have observed not only the shadow, but the diffracted fringes edging its outline."

Man has been ever prone to idolatry; and whilst he adored imaginary deities of woods and groves, we wonder not that he worshipped the host of heaven. So strong was this propensity, that, with respect to the Hebrews, the stringent laws of Moses were not sufficient to repress it. And Josiah had to exercise his prerogative, "To put down the idolatrous priests that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven" (2 Kings xxiii. 5).

In later times superstition assumed another garb, and a supposed power of the planets became blended with the

vagaries of alchymy, and thus the influence of Venus was believed to be directed to copper. Again, as the five visible planets, with the sun and moon, make seven, it was imagined that these ruled the seven days of the week, and Venus was thought to reign on Thursday. This belief was entertained not only by the astrologer, but by the herbalist and physiologist; herbs were to be plucked on certain days, otherwise they would possess no virtue; and the planets were believed to shed their influence on the human body.

The "fair light" had continued to smile and depart without attracting any particular notice, till Copernicus began to speculate on that system of the world which now bears his name. Six centuries before the Christian era, Pythagoras had conceived some faint notion of the true system, but with him it was entombed, and remained buried under false systems for two thousand years. Copernicus, born in 1473, was about thirty-five years of age when he began to consider this subject. Whilst thus engaged, some of his friends raised objections to his views. Their principal objection was this: if the Pythagorean system were true, Venus would present phases like those of the moon. To which he replied, that some time or other that resemblance would be found out.

When Galileo, born in 1564, was about thirty years of age, he heard that in Holland a glass had been invented, through which very distant objects were seen distinctly, as if near at hand. His curiosity was excited, and he began to consider what must be the form of such a glass. The result of his investigation was the invention of the telescope. One of his earliest discoveries with that instrument was the phases of Venus. He sent an account of the discovery in a letter, written from Florence in 1611, to William de Medici, the duke of Tuscany's ambassador at Prague, desiring him to communicate it to Kepler, the illustrious astronomer. In that letter he makes the following observations:—"We have hence a demonstration of two grand questions which have to this day been doubtful and disputed. One is, that the planets, in their own nature, are opaque bodies; and the other, that

Venus necessarily moves round the sun, as also Mercury and the other planets; a thing well believed indeed by Pythagoras, Copernicus, Kepler, and myself, but never before proved, as now it is, by ocular inspection upon Venus."

The announcement excited the curiosity of all the astronomers of Europe; and in further observations some thought they saw a satellite or moon belonging to this planet. In 1672 and 1686, John Dominic Cassini, of the Royal Observatory, Paris; in 1740, Mr. Short, the eminent English astronomer; and in 1761, M. Montaign, of Limoges in France, thought they saw it. It is indeed probable that Venus has a satellite; and favourable observations, as those afforded by the transits, of which we are about to speak, may decide this point.

When the Copernican system began to be acknowledged, it was seen that as the planets Mercury and Venus are nearer the sun than is the earth, they would occasionally come between the earth and sun, and would be seen projected upon the sun's face; and Kepler predicted a transit of Venus to occur in 1631, which was looked for by Peter Gassendi at Paris, but in vain.

When a young man courts the sciences, we naturally inquire respecting the favours they bestow. To Jeremiah Horrox, born 1616, they presented a spectacle, which had never been beheld by mortal before. He found, by his own calculation, that Venus would transit the sun's disc 24th November, 1639: and on that day he beheld Venus on the sun, at an obscure village, called Hool, about fifteen miles northward of Liverpool. This has gained for him a record in the annals of astronomy; and Newton and Halley, in after years, expressed regret at his early death, which occurred in 1641.

The determination of the distance of the sun from the earth is a problem which has engaged the attention of astronomers from the earliest times. Aristarchus, of Samos, the celebrated Greek astronomer, who flourished about 420 years before Christ, attempted to resolve it by means of the phases of the moon; he sought to determine the angle subtended by the semi-diameter of the

moon's orbit, as seen from the sun. Hipparchus, born at Nice in Bithynia, whose observations are dated between 160 and 135 years before Christ; and after him Ptolemy, who flourished at Alexandria in Egypt, about the 120th year of the Christian era, both endeavoured to determine the sun's parallax (the angle the earth's semi-diameter subtends, as seen from the sun), by observations on lunar eclipses. John Dominic Cassini, in 1672, sought to discover the parallax of the planet Mars, and thence that of the sun. He announced, as the result of his observations, that the sun's parallax was ten seconds, and, by trigonometrical calculation, this gives the distance 82,000,000 miles, which, however, is now known to be too little.

When Dr. Halley, whose comet (the comet called after him, because he discovered its period) appeared so conspicuously in the autumn of 1835, was but twenty years of age, he embarked for the island of St. Helena, to take a catalogue of the stars which revolve around the south pole. Whilst there he observed a transit of Mercury, and the thought then entered his mind that the transits of Venus could be made subservient to the determination of the sun's distance.

"There are many things," says Dr. Halley, in a communication made to the Royal Society, some forty years after, "that seem quite incredible to the illiterate, which yet by means of mathematical principles may easily be solved. Scarcely any problem will appear more difficult than that of determining the distance of the sun from the earth; but even this, when we are made acquainted with some exact observations, will, without much labour, be effected.

"It is well known that the distance of the sun is, by different astronomers, supposed different, according to what was judged most probable from the best conjecture that each could form. Ptolemy and his followers, as also Copernicus and Tycho Brahe, thought it to be 1,200 semi-diameters of the earth; Kepler, 3,500 nearly; Riccioli doubles the distance mentioned by Kepler, whilst Hevelius only increases it by one-half. But Venus and Mercury having, by the assistance of the telescope, been seen to

pass over the sun's disc, deprived of their borrowed brightness, it is found that the apparent diameters of the planets are much less than they were formerly supposed.

"The transit of Venus over the sun's disc, whose parallax being almost four times as great as the solar parallax, will cause very sensible differences between the times in which Venus will seem to be passing over the sun from different parts of the earth; and from these differences, if they be properly observed, the sun's parallax may be determined, even to a small part of a second. Nor are any other instruments required for this purpose than common telescopes and clocks, which are good of their kind; and in the observers, nothing more is requisite than fidelity, diligence, and a moderate skill in astronomy.

"Venus is seldom to be seen within the sun's disc; and during the course of 120 years it could never be once observed, namely, from the year 1639, when it was observed by that excellent youth Horrox, and by him only since the creation, to the year 1761, in which year Venus will again pass over the sun on the 26th of May." (This was written before the reformation of the calendar, consequently the date is eleven days before the 6th of June, the day on which the transit was observed.) "I recommend this subject," continues the Dr., "again and again, to those curious astronomers who may have an opportunity of observing those things when I am dead, that they would diligently apply themselves to making the necessary observations; and then, having ascertained with more exactness the magnitude of the planetary orbits, I hope it will redound to their immortal fame and glory."

Dr. Halley died 14th January, 1742, in the eighty-sixth year of his age, before the time of the transit; but his wishes were fully complied with, and the astronomers of the day observed it from different parts of the earth. As seen at Stockholm Observatory, the whole duration between the two internal contacts was five hours, fifty minutes, and forty-five seconds. At Torneo, in Lapland, it was five hours, fifty minutes, and nine seconds. At Madras, five hours, fifty-

one minutes, and forty-three seconds; and at Calcutta, five hours, fifty minutes, and thirty-six seconds. The Rev. Mr. Bliss, the Astronomer Royal, by means of three good observations at Greenwich, found the diameter of Venus on the sun was fifty-eight seconds.

It was expected that the question of the satellite would be set at rest by this transit; it does not, however, appear that it was seen in any of the foreign observations. But an anonymous writer in the *London Chronicle*, of June 18th, says that he saw the satellite on the sun, the day of the transit, at St. Neots, Huntingdonshire; that it moved in a track parallel to that of the planet; that Venus quitted the disc at thirty-one minutes after eight, and the satellite at six minutes after nine.

The next transit, calculated to take place 3rd June, 1769, was looked forward to by the scientific world with much anxious interest. Captain Cook commanded the expedition which conveyed the English astronomers to Otaheite; and there the observations were most successfully made, for on that day the sun rose without a cloud. Observations on this, as on the former transit, were made at distant places, and the results afterwards compared. Mr. Short deduced the quantity of the sun's parallax from the best observations that were made on the transit of the 6th June, 1761, and found it to have been 8.52 seconds on the day of the transit, when the sun was very nearly at his greatest distance from the earth; and 8.65 seconds when the sun is at his mean distance, from which is obtained 95,173,127 English miles for the sun's mean distance from the earth. Mr. Hornsby, from the observations on the transit 3rd June, 1769, deduces 8.65 seconds, the sun's parallax for that day; and 8.78 seconds for the mean parallax, from which he makes the mean distance 93,726,900 English miles.

The earth performs its orbit revolution in 365 days, and Venus in 224 days; and thirteen periods of Venus are nearly equal to eight of the earth; but in 235 years the earth and Venus return very nearly to the same relative positions. Dr. Halley computed the years in which Venus would appear on the sun for a

millennium, and found that those at the ascending node (when Venus ascends above the plane of the earth's orbit) occur in the month of December, for the calendar has been reformed, in the years 918, 1161, 1396, 1631, 1639, 1874, 2109, 2117; and at the descending node (when Venus descends below the plane of the earth's orbit) in June, in the years 1048, 1233, 1291, 1518, 1526, 1761, 1769, 1996, 2004. In presence of these numbers what an ephemeral being does man appear! The consideration penetrates the soul with indescribable emotions of reverence for the eternal Creator:—

"A thousand ages, in whose sight,
Are like an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the morning sun!"

John Dominic Cassini, in the years 1665 and 1636, and afterwards his son James, discovered spots on the face of Venus, and by observing them they ascertained her motion round her axis to be performed in twenty-three hours twenty minutes. This has been in a great measure confirmed by the more accurate observations of De Vico (the discoverer of a comet of the short period of five and a-half years), from 1840 to 1842, who gives, by means of a great number of spots upon Venus, the mean value of her period of rotation, twenty-three hours, twenty-one one-third minutes—this is the length of day on Venus, which is less than that on the earth. Francis Bianchini, the Italian astronomer, whom Pope Clement XI., in 1701, appointed to the secretaryship of the Conferences for the Reformation of the Calendar, found that the north pole of her rotation points to the twentieth degree of Aquarius, and is elevated fifteen degrees above the plane of the ecliptic, and the axis keeps parallel to itself during the planet's revolution about the sun. The size of Venus is something less than that of the earth, for while the diameter of the earth is about 7,900 miles, that of Venus is but 7,700. No principal planet comes so near the earth as Venus. She can approach to within a distance of 27,000,000 miles, but can recede to a distance of 163,000,000 miles. This is the reason of the great variability of her appearance. We have now touched upon most

of what is known at present respecting this planet. We believe that, as time rolls on, the Great Ruler of the universe will lead man to know more. The transits will excite the curiosity of future generations, and will, no doubt, be attentively observed; for we have more faith in what we have predicted in our millennium, than in the vagaries of Dr. Cumming with respect to his. J.

ON THE MISAPPLICATION OF SCRIPTURE.

It frequently happens that, in our eagerness to defend favourite dogmas, we so overlook the real meaning of the passages of Scripture which we press into our service, and so misapply them, that we lose sight of the really important doctrines they were designed to teach. We are liable to do this when we set out with views of the objects of the Christian Dispensation, which we have formed independently of the Christian Scriptures, or in obedience to the authority of great names, or under the influence of popular opinion.

It is easy, and I may say natural, for us to do so under the circumstances named. Thus if we happen in early life to have imbibed the opinion that Christ intended to teach particular doctrines respecting his own person, and that he insisted upon them as matters of great importance, we shall look upon his words through the medium of that opinion, and shall think that the purpose of those words was to inculcate such doctrines. But if we suppose that, leaving his person quietly amongst the circumstances under which it was presented, and leaving us to form our opinions respecting it from the facts connected with it, his object was to reveal the truth about God's attributes, character, and moral government, and about man's duties and destinations, the same words will, in many instances, appear to have a quite different meaning, and will be understood, in their reference to that admitted purpose of the Saviour's mission, to contribute to it.

The words "Christ, who is the image of God," have been misunderstood and undervalued, in the circumstances named. Those words, even while clearly marking that distinction between Christ and God,

which must always exist between a representative and the thing represented, have been pressed into the support of the doctrine that Christ is God. And yet how much more valuable they are, and how much more delightful is the lesson they teach, when we regard them as indications of the attributes and character of the Deity. In the former case they are taken as the mere expression of a vague and ineffectual notion, whereas, in the latter, they inculcate a powerful, delightful, and saving truth. It is not from such words as those that we acquire our knowledge of Christ, but our knowledge of God is enlarged and improved by them. He is rightly spoken of as the admirable image by which God is represented to us, and therefore not God himself. We may, as we have good opportunity of doing, form our acquaintance with Jesus elsewhere. He is introduced to us in the gospel narratives. We look at him through the medium of his benevolent miracles, his instructive discourses, his holy life; and his pious trust in God, until we know him well; and when, while we have this acquaintance with him, we receive the information, or admit the truth, that he is the express image of the invisible God, we also look up, through him, to the Father of our spirits, with love and truth.

The observations with which I began this communication may be readily applied to many other portions of Scripture; and, amongst them, to some of the parables. It is often the case that the great truths, or the useful lessons which they were intended to teach, are overlooked, while attention is fixed upon some notion which their minor details or incidental circumstances are supposed to support. Thus the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, which plainly teaches and illustrates the important lesson that those who are not convinced by one form of clear evidence, of any important truth to which it is applied, would not be likely to be convinced if evidence for it were given in another form; as it does where it says, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead," is appealed to in behalf of many opinions which we have no reason to suppose the teacher had in view when

he delivered it. It has, for instance, amongst other things, been pressed into the service of the idea of a local and material hell, because, amongst its imaginative scenery or machinery, of which the beggar at the rich man's gate, the parched tongue, and Lazarus in Abraham's bosom are interesting portions, it speaks of a place of torment; and it has been cited as an argument for the eternity of future suffering, because one of the actors says to another, "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot," etc.; though these are only steps of the story by which the teacher advanced to his important conclusion, the correctness of which was shown by the hard unbelief of the Jews after his own resurrection.

So also with the parable of the Prodigal Son, by which we are taught, and are enabled to understand the truth, that "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance." No fewer than three parables, namely that of the Lost Sheep, that of the Missing Piece of Money, and this of the Prodigal Son, in which he who said to his elder son, who had never at any time transgressed his commands, "Thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine;" also said, "It was meet that we should make merry and be glad, for this thy brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found," thereby showing how, without any lack of love to his elder son, he was delighted at the return of the younger, were cited for that purpose. But the words which this parable was so well qualified to illustrate, are read as if they had no connection with it. The idea has been gathered from them, or supported by them, notwithstanding its presence, and in opposition to its spirit, that penitent sinners are more *beloved* in heaven than uniformly righteous persons; and it has been strained to meet all sorts of imaginary theories, while what it really teaches is that there is peculiar joy, caused by the particular circumstance, and not peculiar love, which is constant and unabating, in heaven, because the wandering sinner has returned to the home which his wiser brother never left, and

has again become what the other had not ceased to be.

It is much to be regretted that Scripture should be so perverted and misapplied. Its language is sure to be turned from a high and holy purpose to an inferior one, when such is the case. It is sure to be deprived of much of its power when so misused. The best sense in which the words of Jesus and his apostles can be used, must be that in which they were employed by them. It must be when so used that they go directly to the objects their authors had in view; and that we learn from them the best lessons about the providential care, the fatherly relations, and the moral government of God. To instruct us upon those subjects was their aim. Salvation from many evils is the necessary consequence of having well learned those lessons, and of having living faith in the revelations which are made through them. In Christ's own opinion it was "life eternal"—man's highest spiritual privilege—"to know the only true God as the Father, and Jesus Christ whom he had sent." He teaches "that no man cometh unto the *Father* but by him;" and his disciples declare that "he who cometh unto God must believe that he is the rewarder of those who diligently seek him." To us, with the many wants incident to our nature, with our conscious weakness these are delightful truths; and therefore anything which can cause them to be overlooked, or dimly seen in the Scriptures which are intended to teach them, must be a serious evil. To guard against the intrusions of such a foe, is a duty which we owe it both to ourselves and others, to perform to the utmost of our power. A thorough knowledge of Scripture, and an intimate acquaintance with its meaning, will best enable us to discover religious truth; and as such knowledge and acquaintance are sure to be gained by attentive, serious, and unprejudiced perusal of the sacred pages, when every passage is taken along with its connections, and when the objects which its authors had in view when they wrote or spoke are attended to, we shall surely not be unwilling to do Christ, and Christianity, and ourselves, the justice of studying them with such care and impartiality.

J. N.

THE FIRST THREE STEPS THAT LED ME TO UNITARIANISM.

"AND what a fall," said a ministerial friend of mine, from evangelical religion to rank Unitarianism. So I caught hold of his hand and told him I would not let him go until he heard from my own lips the three first steps that led me into these "fatal mistakes," as he pleased to call them. "The first step, my dear sir, was CHRISTIAN CHARITY." He laughed when I said these words. "One rule of your church put to me and all ministers was, '*Do you approve of our discipline, and will you enforce it.*' Your DISCIPLINE imposes conditions of church membership that many pious and worthy Trinitarian people would not subscribe to, so they are members of other churches. I would never refuse full communion to any church, any person, who loves the Lord Jesus in sincerity. I would sweep away those partitions your church lawyers have erected; I could not be so exclusive as your church, and this was the first step towards Unitarianism. You cannot deny I have made out my case that the downward road was begun in Christian charity. And now I come to notice the second step, which was HONESTY." And he looked grave when I said this word, for many ministers feel aggrieved that at their examinations they are called upon to subscribe what they do not fully believe. They understand the question put, and answer it, in a different sense from the original framer of the question. They subscribe for peace and quietness sake. They tamper with conscience. I refused to subscribe to the human creed, for I was not sure that it was Christian truth. I desired to be an orthodox minister, but refused to subscribe to aught but the clear teaching of the Bible. This, sir, I call honesty. And now for the third step in the "downward course," as you call it. I determined to read the New Testament most carefully through, and gather from the words of Christ and his apostles the faith of the primitive church. I most clearly found that your peculiar and distinctive doctrines of the Trinity, etc., etc., were not to be found in the book. The doctrines of the Unitarians, which they express in Scriptural

language, were certainly Scriptural, so I took up their ill name; it was at first a heavy cross; now I glory in it. These were the first three steps—CHARITY, HONESTY, and the BIBLE, that led me astray, as you call it. Warn the people against these three, if you think well; for be assured, as soon as the human barriers that now make sects are cast down; as soon as ministers are ready to decline signing human creeds as a condition of serving the office of minister; as soon as the Bible is acknowledged in its plain and literal meaning; from that very day Trinitarianism will wane, and Unitarianism begin to be triumphant.

SECTARIANISM.

AN Irishman, entering the fair at Balinagone, saw the well-defined form of a large round head bulging out the canvas of a tent. The temptation was irresistible: up went his shillelah, down went the man. Forth rushed from the tent a host of angry fellows, to revenge the onslaught. Judge of their astonishment when they found the assailant to be one of their own faction.

"Och, Nicholas," said they, "and did ye not know it was Brady O'Brien ye hit?"

"Truth, did I not, says he, "bad luck to me for that same; but sure, if my own father had been there, and his head looking so nice and convenient, I could not have helped myself."

Poor Paddy! true type of some controversial spirits, it is not in them to let the chance of a blow go by. They are of the brood of the vulture, not of the dove. They "scent the battle from afar." And many mooted points for which they have done fierce fight are so infinitesimally small, that I would not give the turn of a button shank to get them infallibly decided.

Many contentions arise out of sheer misunderstanding. Disputants often become metaphysical according to the explanation given by the Scotchman, who said:

"Why, ye see, metaphysics is when twa men are talking thegither, and the one of them dinna ken what he is talking aboot, and the ither canna understand him."

Drs. Chalmers and Stuart must have been a "wee bit" metaphysical that day they got into a controversy about the nature of faith. Chalmers, compelled at length to leave his friend, said:

"I have time to say no more, but you will find my views fully and well put in a recent tract, called *Difficulties in the Way of Believing*."

"Why," exclaimed the astonished Dr. Stuart, "that is my own tract! I published it myself!"

During the Peninsular war, an officer of artillery had just served a gun with admirable precision against a body of men posted in a wood to his left. When the Duke rode up, after turning his glass for a moment in the direction of the shot, he said in his cool way: "Well aimed, Captain; but no more: they are our own 39th!"

This sad blunder has been repeated too often in the armies of Jesus. With what fatal frequency have great guns of the Church, which might have battered down citadels of Satan, been directed against Christian brethren! There are surely devils enough in the world to shoot at, without firing into each other.—*Rev. S. Colley.*

THE WAY TO SPOIL GIRLS.

If a parent wishes a recipe how to spoil a daughter, it can be easily and readily given, and can be proved by the experience of hundreds to be certain and efficacious.

1.—Be always telling her from earliest childhood what a beautiful creature she is. It is a capital way of inflating the vanity of a little girl, to be constantly exclaiming, "How pretty!" Children understand such flattery, even when in the nurse's arms, and the evil is done the character in its earliest formation.

2.—Begin as soon as she can toddle around, to rig her up in fashionable clothes and rich dresses. Put a hoop upon her at once, with all the artificial adornments of flounces and feathers, and flowers and curls. Fondness for dress will thus become a prominent characteristic, and will usurp the whole attention of the young immortal, and be a long step towards spoiling her.

3.—Let her visit so much that she finds no pleasure at home, and therefore will not be apt to stay there and learn home duties. It is a capital thing for a spoiled daughter to seek all her happiness in visiting, and change of place and associates. She will thus grow up as useless as modern fashionable parents delight that their daughters should be.

4.—Let her reading consist of novels of the nauseatingly sentimental kind. She will be spoiled sooner than if she perused history or science. Her heart will be occupied by fictitious scenes and feelings; her mind filled with unrealities; and her aims placed on fashion and dress, and romantic attachments.

5.—Be careful that her education gives her a smattering of all the accomplishments, without the slightest knowledge of the things really useful in life. Your daughter won't be spoiled so long as she has a real desire to be useful in the world, and aims at its accomplishment. If her mind and time are occupied in modern accomplishments, there will be no thought of the necessity and virtue of being of some real use to somebody pervading her heart, and she will soon be ready as a spoiled daughter.

6.—As a consequence, keep her in profound ignorance of all the useful arts of housekeeping, impressing upon her mind that it is vulgar to do anything for yourself, or to learn how anything is done in the house. A spoiled daughter never should be taught the mysteries of the kitchen—such things a lady always leaves to the servants. It would be "vulgar" for her to know how to dress trout or shad, to bake, to wash, to iron, to sweep, to wring the neck of a live chicken, pluck it and prepare it, or do anything that servants are hired to do. As a mistress of a house it is her duty to sit on a velvet sofa all day, in the midst of a pyramid of silks and flounces, reading the last flash novel, while her domestics are performing the labours of the house.

To complete the happiness of your spoiled daughter, marry her to a bearded youth with soft hands, who knows as little how to earn money as she does to save it. Her happiness will be finished for her lifetime.

REASONABLENESS OF EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT EXAMINED.

Continued from page 124.

ANOTHER weak point in the argument for everlasting punishment consists in the proof that all opportunity for repentance is confined to this life. Only two or three texts are quoted in proof of this very important position. One is taken from the book of Ecclesiastes, and declares that, "in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be," of which there is no evidence that it has any relation to the subject, or if it has, that it carries the least authority with it. Another passage asserts that "there is no work, nor desire, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest." But this would prove too much; for it would prove that there was no knowledge in the other life. Another passage, quoted by Dr. Adams from the book of Revelation, says, "Let him that is unjust be unjust still," from which it is inferred that men have no opportunity hereafter for repentance. But as this is said to those who are in *this* world, waiting for the coming of Christ, it also proves too much, if taken literally, since it would declare that men cannot repent even in *this* world. Such is the extremely slight foundation on which this essential part of the doctrine is made to rest. Never was there so weak a support for so important a position.

The arguments from reason, by which our writer supports this part of his doctrine, are all taken from the plane of the lowest Naturalism. He thinks it reasonable that the Almighty should suspend the everlasting destiny of his creatures upon what they do or omit doing in this life, because men, in earthly transactions, adopt a similar principle. A railroad train is advertised to start at a certain hour. If we are there a minute too late, we lose our opportunity of going on an important journey. We think this reasonable; why, then, argues Dr. Adams, should we think it unreasonable for God to make us lose our chance throughout eternity, if we do not take the opportunity during life? God has given us full notice, he says, of his intention; we have been duly notified; and, after due notice, it is thought reasonable, in earthly business transactions, for people to run their chance. A man may commit a crime in a minute, for which he is sentenced to imprisonment for life, or to capital punishment. We think this reasonable; why should we think it unreasonable that God should send men to an everlasting hell in consequence of sin committed in a short life-time?

All these arguments are fallacious, because they apply to the Infinite, conditions belonging wholly to the finite—because they transfer to Him whose ways are not as our ways, and whose thoughts are not as our thoughts, the poor necessities of human ignorance and weakness. To those who reason thus, the Almighty may say, "Thou thoughtest me altogether such a one as thou thyself." It is because man is weak and ignorant, that he is obliged to live under these limitations. If we were able to do

differently, we should not make such severe consequences flow from human ignorance and weakness. We do such things, not because we think them absolutely just and good, but because we cannot help it. To argue that, because it is reasonable for human weakness to do something which it cannot help, it is reasonable for Divine Omnipotence to do an infinitely more injurious thing of the same kind, is to fly in the face of all logic and reason.

Men make a rule, that, if I am not at the station when the train starts, I shall lose my trip for that day. Yes; but suppose the rule should be, that, if I arrived a moment too late, I should be crucified. Suppose a father should give full notice to his children, that, whenever any of them mispronounced a word, he should be burnt alive. But it is easier, according to Dr. Adams's theory, for a child never to make a mistake, than not to commit the sins for which it is to be punished with everlasting torment. "What man among you is there, being a father," who would cause his children to come into the world exposed to such fearful risks; who would allow them to be born with constitutions tending inevitably to sin, the inevitable consequence of which, after a few short years of life, is never-ending torment, the only possible escape from which is salvation through a Being of whom the majority never heard, according to a system which the majority cannot believe, and by a process which, except by a special help, none of them are able to accomplish? We should say that we would not have children under these conditions. It were better that such children had never been born. If we, then, being evil, would not subject our children to such risk, how much less would our Father in heaven do anything of the kind!

The reply to such arguments, by those whom Thomas Burnet calls the "unmerciful doctors" and "ferocious theologians," is always the same. Because finite evil exists, and is not inconsistent with the Divine plan, therefore infinite evil may also exist, and not be inconsistent with the Divine plan. Because one may suffer for a time in this world, therefore he may be compelled to suffer for ever in the other world. It is assumed that there is no essential distinction between time and eternity, between finite and infinite evil. Here is the immense fallacy of the argument. The difference is simply this: All finite *suffering*, however great, is as nothing, when compared with everlasting happiness afterward; but all finite *happiness*, however great, is as nothing, when compared with everlasting suffering afterward. If we deny therefore the doctrine of everlasting suffering, evil virtually disappears from the universe; if we accept it, good virtually disappears, as far as the sufferers are concerned. If all evil is finite, the goodness of God can be fully justified; but if to any one it is infinite, no such theodicy is possible.

This is the fatal objection to the doctrine of everlasting punishment. It clouds the face of the Heavenly Father with impenetrable gloom. It takes away the best consolations of the Gospel. When Jesus tells us to forgive our enemies, that we may be like our Heavenly Father,

who sends his blessings upon the evil and the good, this doctrine adds that God's character is thus forgiving only in this world; but that, in the other world, he will torment his enemies for ever in hopeless suffering. When we seek consolation, amid the griefs and separations of this world, by looking to a better world, where all tears will be wiped away, we have presented to us, instead, this awful vision of unmitigated horror. Instead of finite evil being swallowed up into infinite good, it darkens down into infinite woe.

Dr. Adams quotes Thomas Burnet, Master of the Charterhouse, as a striking instance of one who, though he denied or doubted this doctrine, admitted, nevertheless, that the Scriptures were probably against him. He quotes him correctly as saying, "Human nature shrinks from the very name of eternal punishment: yet the Scriptures seem to hold the other side." Though Dr. Adams gives the Latin, and refers to the page of the book, let us hope, for his own sake, that he quotes it at second-hand, which, as he twice mis-spells the name, is not unlikely; for Dr. Burnet, so far from admitting that the Scriptures are "probably against him," concludes, after an examination of the leading passages, that they prove nothing certainly as to the eternal duration of future punishment. He quotes the passage in which the Jewish servant is said to become a slave for ever, meaning till the year of jubilee; in which circumcision is called an *everlasting covenant*, meaning that it shall be abolished by the same divine authority; in which the land of Canaan was given for an *everlasting possession* to Abraham and his seed, from which they have long since been expelled, etc. Dr. Burnet does, indeed, say that the Scriptures *seem* to favour the doctrine he opposes; but he then goes on to show that such is not the case. He also "awakens antiquity," and calls to his aid the merciful doctors of the early Church—Justin Martyr, Jerome, the Gregories, etc.—to support his hope in a merely limited future suffering.

We will now consider the meaning of some of the texts usually adduced in support of this doctrine. Of these texts, there are some six or seven only upon which much stress is laid; and of these the principal ones are as follows:

1.—Matt. xviii. 8: "Having two eyes, two hands," etc., "to be cast into hell-fire," or "into everlasting fire" (*to pur to aionion*)—(*ten geenan tou purros*).

2.—Matt. xxv. 46: "These shall go away into everlasting (eternal) punishment; but the righteous into life eternal (*kolasin aionion* and *zoen aionion*). The same adjective is used in both places here, in the Greek; but our translators have seen fit to render it "everlasting" in the first place, and "eternal" in the second. There is no authority for such a different translation. The word *kolasis*, translated "punishment," occurs in one other place in the New Testament; this is (1 John iv. 18): "Perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment." In this last instance it is evident that the idea of punishment is not found; but only that of suffering. In the LXX. (Ezek. xiv. 3, 4, 7), it is translated "stumbling-block," and means, says Schleusner

(Lexicon in LXX.), "all that is the source of misfortune or suffering." Donnegan gives as its meaning, "the act of clipping or pruning; generally, restriction, restraint, reproof, check, chastisement; *lit. and met.*, punishment."

The true translation of the passage, then, is:

"These shall go away into the sufferings or punishments of eternity; and the righteous into the life of eternity."

The simple, direct, and natural meaning therefore of this passage is, that, besides temporal joy and suffering, there is eternal joy and suffering: beside the joys and sufferings which have their root in time and in temporal things, there are joys and sufferings which have their root in eternity and in eternal things. In the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, the sufferings of eternity are described as following directly upon judgment, and as being its natural consequence. The judgment on each soul consists, according to this passage, in showing it its real character. Both the good and the bad are represented as needing such a judgment as this. Until the judgment takes place, men are described as being ignorant of the true nature of their own past conduct. They do not know their own good or their own evil; they do not understand themselves as they really are. They have done good and bad actions, but have not understood the value of those actions. They have not seen that in every deed of charity, in every act of humble benevolence, they were helping Christ and his cause. They have not understood that by every selfish and cruel deed they were injuring their Master. But the judgment reveals all this to them, and lifts them immediately out of temporal joy and pain, into eternal joy and pain. They rise out of temporal things into eternal things, and the new insight is to them a source of spiritual joy or spiritual suffering.

This is the natural meaning of the text. There is no idea conveyed, in either case, concerning the duration of suffering or joy. It is the kind of life, not the duration of life; the kind of suffering, not the duration of suffering.

This view becomes very evident when we compare with this passage the other passages where the noun *aion* and the adjective *aionios* occur in the New Testament. The phrase "eternal life," as we know, occurs often in the New Testament, especially in the Gospel of John. Now, this term, "eternal life," usually means, not never-ending existence, nor never-ending happy existence, but a present spiritual state of the soul. Take a few instances of this:

John iii. 36: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

John iv. 14: "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life."

John vi. 47: "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."

John xvii. 3: "This is life eternal, that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

Gal. vi. 8: "Shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

1 Tim. i. 12: "Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life."

In all these cases "eternal life" evidently refers to the present religious state of the soul, not to any future outward condition. It is an inward life which is described, not an outward one; a present life, and not a future one. When it is said (Rom. ii. 7) that God will give eternal life to those who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality, the meaning, surely, is, not that he will give them a life which cannot end, but rather that he will give them a life having a heavenly or spiritual nature. The spring of water in the soul, which Christ promises, wells up constantly into present spiritual joy—not into future, never-ending being.

In some instances, if *aionios* were translated "everlasting," or "never-ending," it would make such palpable nonsense, that our translators have been obliged to give it an entirely different rendering. Thus (2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. i. 2) we have the phrase *pro kronon aionion*, which would be, literally, "before eternity," or "before everlasting time began," according to the common rendering. They have therefore translated it, "before the world began." In the same way (Matt. xxiv. 3; 1 Cor. x. 11) they are obliged to change their usual rendering, or they would have to say, "So shall it be at the end of for ever," or, "The ends of eternity have arrived."

Mark ix. 43, 50, it is said that the "worm does not die" in Gehenna, and "the fire is not quenched." This therefore is thought to teach the doctrine of never-ending punishment hereafter; but this was a proverbial expression, taken from the book of Isaiah.

Chapter lvi. 24, the prophet says that, in the times of the Messiah, all men shall come and worship in the presence of Jehovah, and shall then go out and look upon the dead bodies of the men who had transgressed against the Lord. "For their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." Our Saviour therefore is not making an original doctrinal statement, but he is quoting from Isaiah. Now, the passage in Isaiah refers not to punishment of the soul hereafter, but to the destruction of the bodies of transgressors in the Valley of Hinnom. The fire and the worms in that valley were not everlasting in any strict sense. When Isaiah says, "Their worm shall not die, nor their fire be quenched," he expresses merely the utter destruction which would fall upon them. The fire and the worms of the Valley of Hinnom have long since disappeared; but, while the fire lasted, it was the emblem, to the Jews, of the destruction which was to fall upon those who resisted the will of Jehovah. But it is not to be supposed that the idea of eternity, which is not in the original image, should be added in the figure. The fire and the worms were to last in the Valley of Hinnom as long as there were idolators to be punished for their idolatry; and so the spiritual suffering consequent upon sin lasts as long as sin lasts. Sin is perpetual misery; conscience is a worm which never dies; bad passions are a fire which is never extinguished. This is the simple and natural meaning of this passage.

3.—Matt. xxvi. 24. In this passage, as it stands in our translation, Jesus says concerning Judas, "Woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It were good for that man, if he had never been born" (Mark xiv. 21). The argument is, that, if it were good for Judas not to have been born, it must be impossible that he should ever repent and be saved; because, if he should ever be saved, and his punishment should cease (though at ever so remote a period), it would be better for him to have been born, than not to have been born, since there would remain an eternity of happiness to be enjoyed afterward. And, if this be true of Judas, it may be also true of others.

But, in reply to this argument, we say:

1.—The translation is doubtful. The literal translation is, "Woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for him if that man had never been born." This is the literal rendering of the Greek; and the apparent meaning seems to be, "that it had been good for the Son of man if Judas had not been born." Jesus seems to say that it is a great woe to him, a great sorrow, to be betrayed by one of his own friends, by a member of his own household. It would have been good for Jesus if this traitor, who was to wound his heart so deeply, had never existed.

2.—But, retaining our present translation, the natural application of it is to this life. It means simply this: The earthly life of this man is an entire failure. His life is wholly thrown away. He had better never have been in the world, than to stand, as he will to all time, a monument of the basest treachery. The idea of the future life does not come in at all here.

We have thus gone briefly over some of the leading points of this discussion. Our objections have been taken from the Christian standpoint. We are believers in the divine humanity of the Lord Jesus. We are also believers in the full (though not infallible) inspiration of the New Testament. It is because Dr. Adams's system, so far as he has one, tends to rationalism, materialism, and infidelity, that we oppose it. We contend with him in the interests of belief, and by no means in those of unbelief.

Perhaps Dr. Adams will say (if he read this article) that we have misunderstood him, misrepresented him, and possibly that we have abused him. Such is often the complaint of one frankly opposed and exposed by an honest criticism. Perhaps he will add, that our writing is beneath refutation, and that his friends have advised him to take no notice of it. Such is sometimes his custom, when pressed by weighty, and possibly unanswerable, argument. But we may be permitted to say that we have no desire to misrepresent or to abuse him. We hear that, in private, Dr. Adams is an amiable man, and much esteemed in the domestic circle. We should never wish to interfere with the smooth flow of his life, if he would abstain from printing what seems to us false and dangerous doctrine.

On the whole, one must feel, in reading these books and tracts, that Dr. Adams is much more to be pitied than to be blamed. Confined in the

strait-jacket of an austere theology; steeped to the lips in Calvinism; working painfully all his life in sectarian harness, with an angry heaven over his head, and a ruined earth about his feet, his friends and neighbours dropping into hell by thousands every year; never having had any real sight of the blessed face of Jesus; having for them no hope full of immortality, but, instead thereof, a terror full of damnation—even a kindly nature and an affectionate heart must suffer, be dwarfed and crippled.

It is not an agreeable task to refute such errors; but believing them equally destructive, in their tendency, to piety and morality, corrupting the Christian life at its centre, and weakening its chief source of power, we feel it a duty not to be avoided. Advancing age does not make us conservative in regard to such doctrines. The longer we live, the more we see of their evil tendency. When young, we shrank from attacking them, fearing lest they might contain some truth beyond the range of our limited experience. But having come to see wherein the essence of Christian truth lies in all varieties of pious experience, we know that this doctrine is an excrescence, weakening always the vital power of the Gospel. It rests on custom, on cowardice, on the fear of change; not on any positive insight or substantial knowledge; but, as Tertullian declared of another doctrine defended by precedent, "Christ did not say, 'I am the Custom,' but, 'I am the Truth.'"

The time will come in which the Christian Church will look back upon its past belief in this doctrine as it looks back now on its former universal belief in the duty of persecution, the primacy of the Pope, or the atonement made by Christ to Satan. It will regard it with the horror with which it now regards its former universal conviction that God was pleased when his children burnt each other alive for difference of opinion. We now shudder when we hear of "*an Act of Faith*," consisting in burning at the stake ten or twenty Jews and Protestants. Our children will shudder with a still more inward grief that we could make it *an act of faith* to believe that God burns millions of his own children in unquenchable fire for ever, because they deny Calvin's view of the atonement, or the Church definition of the Trinity, or because of any possible amount of sin committed in this world.

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MOTHER! THIS IS THY WORK.

A LITTLE merry, rosy child,
Amongst her playmates gambolled wild,
With innocent delight.
"Drink this, my love," her mother cried,
And drew the prattler to her side,
And offered something bright.

The fair one tasted, turned her head—
"It is not nice, mamma," she said,
"Pray do not give it me."
"Pooh! pooh! my child, thou must not say
"Wine is not nice; thou'lt find some day
"People will laugh at thee."

Amidst a gay and thoughtless throng,
To jest profane, and foolish song,
A maiden lent her ear.
Awhile she listened with dismay,
But soon the wine-cup chased away
Her gloom, and lulled her fear.

A mother's head with grief was bowed,
A father's voice with wrath was loud,
As from his home he spurned
A daughter—once his joy and pride—
But who, a sullied name to hide,
To stranger hearths now turned.

Within a damp, unfurnished room,
'Midst squalid poverty and gloom,
A wretched woman lay.
Her glazing eye, and gasping breath,
Betokened that the hand of Death
Would soon lead her away.

She gazed upon the dreary scene,
And thought of what she once had been,
And traced her progress dark.
Then, as communing with the dead,
The dying woman feebly said—
"Mother, this is thy work!"

"Thou 'twas taught me to love strong drink,
"Twas the first step to Ruin's brink—
"There were not many more.
"When drink had stupified my brain,
"A tempter sought my heart to stain—
"To spurn I had not power.

"I fell—and my reward was scorn—
"Cast out, forsaken, and forlorn,
"My peace and virtue gone.
"What, then, could save? the past undo?
"What course was left me to pursue?
"One—one remained—but one!

"I followed—and it led me here—
"My constant friends, Remorse, Despair,
"And now my doom, oh, God!"
She ceased—a gasp—her breath was gone.
Two days, and then the fallen one
Was laid beneath the sod.

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

EPITAPH ON THE TOMB OF SOCIUS.—Luther took off the roof of Babylon; Calvin threw down the walls; Socinus dug up the foundations.

FILIAL TENDERNESS.—The three sons of an eastern lady were invited to furnish her with an expression of their love before she went a long journey. One brought a marble tablet with the inscription of her name; another presented her with a rich garland of fragrant flowers; and the third entered her presence, and thus accosted her: "Mother, I have neither marble tablet nor fragrant nosegay, but I have a HEART. Here your name is engraven, here your memory is precious; and this heart, full of affection, will follow you wherever you travel, and remain with you wherever you repose."

ATHANASIAN CREED.—Gibbon, in note 113 to the 37th chapter of his "Decline and Fall," says: "The three following truths, however surprising they may seem, are now universally acknowledged. 1. St. Athanasius is not the author of the Creed so frequently read in our churches. 2. It does not appear to have existed within a century after his death. 3. It was originally composed in the Latin tongue, and consequently in the western provinces. Gennadius, patriarch of Constantinople, was so much amazed by this extraordinary composition, that he frankly pronounced it to be the work of a drunken man."

AN EARLY CHURCH OF ENGLAND CONFESSOR.—Miles Coverdale, once Bishop of Exeter, and, after Wickliffe, first translator of the English Bible! This exemplary man, because he could not in all points comply with the terms of conformity, in *non-essentials*, endured many years of poverty; was at length, by connivance, placed in a small benefice as a maintenance; was unable to pay even the first fruits on taking possession; even then was not allowed to remain in it, but was ejected shortly before his death, at the advanced age of eighty-one. He was a celebrated preacher, when few could be found who could preach at all, but was thus silenced, though his services were greatly needed; and at last followed to his grave by a vast concourse of people." The church authorities are at present trying to starve Professor Jowett for heresy at Oxford.

TWO VERY DIFFERENT COMPLIMENTS TO UNITARIANS.—Archbishop Secker thus addressed Dr. Lardner: "Good Dr. Lardner, I beg you will pray God to give patience and such degree of ease as He shall think fit; and can only add, that as I hope my spirit is truly Christian towards all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, so I am with particular esteem and thankfulness for the whole of your obliging behaviour to me through life." Shortly before the execution of Herman Van Fleckner, of Dort, in 1569, the Inquisitor thus addressed him: "May you be roasted in hell, you wicked and abominable Unitarian! You would make a hundred thousand doctors of divinity mad."

A BISHOP'S PREFERENCE.—"The great source of Unitarian heresy, is their favourite maxim that the interpretation of Scripture is to be governed by *reason* and not by *authority*."—*Bishop of St. Davids.*

CHURCH LOGIC.—Cardinal Perron says,— "That we cannot convince an Arian by the Scriptures; there is no way but the authority of the church. They tried in England to convert an Arian (Edward Wightman) by Scripture, but he baffled them all, and so they burnt him."

WHEN THE TRINITY WAS DEFINED.—"These doctrines concerning the nature of the Trinity, which, in preceding ages, had escaped the vain curiosity of man, and had been left undefined by words, and undetermined by any particular set of ideas, excited considerable contests through the whole of this (4th) century."—*Rev. Dr. Gregory, of the English church.*

SHE COULD NOT FIND THE TRINITY.—A gentleman, travelling in the back settlements of America, stopped in a small town where a house for refreshment was kept by a native American. He found a black woman sitting in the bar, who, on his entering, laid down a book she had been reading, and came to serve him. Curiosity induced him to take up the book, which he found was the New Testament. "What!" said he, "can you read that book?" She replied, "She could, and was very fond of reading it." They conversed about it for some time, and she made this observation: "They have always told me that I must worship three Gods—that there are three spoken of in this book—but I have never been able to find more than one Being that is to be worshipped, and he is called Our Father."

A FEW WORDS FROM CHARLES KINGSLEY.—So deceitful is this same human heart of ours, that so it is I have seen people quite proud of calling themselves miserable sinners. I say, proud of it; for if they had really felt themselves miserable sinners, they would have said less about their own feelings. If a man really feels what sin is—if he feels what a miserable, pitiful, mean thing it is to be doing wrong when one knows better, to be the slave of one's own tempers, passions, appetites—oh! if man or woman ever knew the exceeding sinfulness of sin, he would hide his own shame in the depths of his heart, and tell it to God alone, or at most to none on earth, save the holiest, the wisest, the truest, the nearest, and the dearest. But when one hears a man always talking about his own sinfulness, one suspects—and from experience one has only too much reason to suspect—that he is simply saying, in a civil way, "I am a better man than you, for I talk about my sinfulness, and you do not."

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